

Dear Diary,

Everything is happening all at once. Today I watched as my little brother died and was buried in the cold winter snow, and I waved 'goodbye' to my mother as I was on my way to my new home. Once I arrived at my new home, on 33 Himmel Street, *everything* changed. After being here a few days things were ok. My papa is really nice, "he loved to smoke" (Zusak, 33). My mama was known as the women with the iron fist and, "was five feet, one inch tall and wore her brownny gray strands of elastic hair in a bun," (Zusak, 34). Hans (Papa) is a painter by trade, and he plays his accordion at the pubs around Molching to earn some extra cash, and Rosa (Mama) does washing and ironing for five of the wealthier homes around the town, sometimes she has me go with her to get the baskets from her clients. It isn't my favorite thing to do, and she yells at me, **often** calling me a, "*saumensch*" (Zusak, 35) meaning I was a pig. I never really thought much of my relationship with Rudy Steiner, the boy who lived next door, "eight months older than me" (Zusak, 48) and who was obsessed with the "black American athlete Jesse Owens" (Zusak, 46). No matter the weather outside, the children of Himmel street would play with each other, usually just a game of soccer, or something to entertain us, being the new kid, I was the position **nobody** wanted, the *goalie*. I wasn't very good, and with that being said, they tried to kick me out of the game, Rudy didn't let that happen though. I never imagined that my best friend would be the boy next door, we started walking to school together everyday, after his mom, Barbara made him promise he would, but I didn't mind... And I soon found out that "the only thing worse than a boy who hates you, a boy who loves you." (Zusak, 52).

Dear Diary,

It's becoming a habit the midnight class papa has for me in my room, he's been teaching me how to read, I forgot to mention earlier, I stole a book from one of the grave diggers who dug my brothers grave, "standing frigidly among the wasteland of snow" (Zusak, 23). Ironically it was called *The Grave Digger's Handbook*, chapter one was about choosing the right equipment, and papa himself struggled with some of the words but he tried no matter what, when he asked me to read one of the pages and I couldn't he started by teaching me the alphabet, starting with "A." Mama and papa didn't always gets along when it came to reading, sometimes she would rather have me help her, but papa said no.

Dear Diary,

I've been so busy helping mama with the ironing and learning to read at night with papa that I haven't had much time to sit down to myself. World War II has begun and I reached my "rightful year level" in school thanks to papa for helping me learn to read (Zusak, 74). A lot has gone on, Rudy had asked me to kiss him, I had to read in front of the whole classroom, and I couldn't even imagine what would happen next. I couldn't handle myself when the opportunity came about to steal another book, it had been "463 days" (Zusak, 83) since I last stole a book, but this time I stole it from the burning pile on the *Führer's* birthday, April 20. I got two new books for Christmas in 1939, thanks to papa trading his cigarettes with a gypsy at the market. By the end

of the year I was pretty much used to life on Himmel Street and got along pretty well with mama and papa.

Dear Diary,

I wrote a letter to my momma... it was February of 1940 and I went out to the mailbox with papa several times, but "Not today, huh" (Zusak, 97). I don't quite know why I thought my mother was going to write a letter back to me. Silly me for thinking maybe she wanted to talk to me, ever since my brother died and I left it's just been her. Alone.

Dear Diary,

And again, later that year, after no gifts were given to me on my birthday and I was missing mama, I took some of the washing money to send more of my letters... The reality set in after I got my second "*Watchen*" (Zusak, 99).

(Later on) Even though the reality I still went out to the mailbox everyday until April, even after the nice lady from the foster care office came and told papa they lost complete contact with my mother.

p.s. I miss my mom and brother a lot.

Dear Diary,

I did something bad today, I sat hidden on the corner of Himmel Street waiting for “Otto Sturm” (Zusak, 162) to ride by with his basket of produce. For a second there Otto wasn’t moving after he flung from his handlebars onto the icy street, and I thought for sure that we killed him! Though he wasn’t dead, I still had a feeling of guilt in my mind.

Dear Diary,

Tonight (November in 1940) I walked out into my kitchen and a “young man” (Zusak, 173) was standing there, not having any idea of who he was, I looked to papa but he just told me to go back to bed.

Dear Diary,

A few days went past after the mysterious man showed up in my kitchen and tonight, mama and papa came to tell me about him; “If you tell anyone about that man…” (Zusak, 203).

p.s. I never knew what to talk to Max about, he slept a lot and didn’t talk much… We were hiding a Jew and nothing could be said to anyone else, he sat in our basement, hidden behind drop sheets held down by paint cans of papa’s and read a book, something called “*Mein Kampf*.”

Dear Diary,

I don’t have much time to sit down and think anymore, I’m either reading at the Mayor’s house, sneaking around with Rudy or spending time teaching Max to read down in the basement. It’s already 1942 and I’m 13. Max and I built a snowman today, right in the basement.. Bad idea

on my part, because the cold wasn't good for Max's health, all I hope for every night is that he doesn't die, he **can't** die.